



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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To: Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
From: Dr. James Hall, Chief Operating Officer
Date: February 10, 2022
Re: Motion on Staff Shortages

On January 19, 2022, the School Committee approved the following motion:

[by Jackie Doherty]: Request the Superintendent collaborate with MASC and MASS to provide the committee with suggested actions that will amplify the concerns of LPS and districts across the state for feasibility re staffing shortages during the ongoing pandemic, such as extending availability of retirees, waivers for remote learning, or other measures that make sense for students, families, and staff.

On January 25, 2022, the administration contacted Glen Koocher related to efforts to handle staffing shortages during the ongoing pandemic, such as extending availability of retirees, waivers for remote learning, or other measures that make sense for students and staff. He noted that they were collaborating with DESE to permit, on an emergency basis, the use of recent retirees and to allow them to work without loss of pension under a critical waiver provision. I'm also aware that Senator Kennedy (D-Lowell) had sponsored a bill in relation to retiree wage thresholds (see attached). The administration collaborated with Senator Kennedy on this effort and appreciates his efforts to assist in this area. Mr. Koocher also recommended recruiting college students to work as aides in the classroom.

The School Committee has approved measures to address these issues. It recently approved the doubling of substitute rates which make substituting much more attractive to area college students and retirees. Additionally, our tutoring rate was increased by \$10 an hour at the last meeting. The HR office has also worked with Middlesex Community College to recruit some of their Adjunct Professors who may not be teaching classes in particular semesters. Additionally, the Lowell School Committee may have been the first District to offer full-time jobs to retirees through 29 Positive Behavior Resource Teacher positions. Additionally, we are already working on a number of proposals to negotiate with the UTL in order to enhance recruitment and retention for the 2022/2023 school year.